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RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 3736  
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 0943  
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 6656  
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 5542  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 3880  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 8940  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ISLAMABAD 000183

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SUBJECT: UPDATE ON PAKISTAN IDP SITUATION

REF: USUN NEW YORK 00035

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

¶1. (C) Summary. As of January 23, the population of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from the conflict-afflicted areas of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) continued to rise, with approximately 10,000 families living in the twelve established camps and approximately 60,000 families living outside the camps. The UN Office of Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has floated a draft consolidated appeal for funding for \$122 million, \$99 million of which is new money, which would cover a population of 600,000. UN offices have been responding to Embassy and Washington requests to examine programs in Pakistan, and on January 27, Embassy had a followup meeting with the visiting OCHA Director, who agreed that the UN has been slow to adequately respond to a growing humanitarian crisis. The 11th corps in Peshawar has been tasked to take the military lead on the IDP issue and is forming a team to assist in the humanitarian efforts. End Summary.

#### CURRENT IDP SITUATION

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¶2. (U) According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 59,224 individuals (or approximately 10,000 families) are currently living in the twelve established camps. Outside these camps, 149,235 officially registered individuals (or approximately 25,000 families) are living with host families or in rental properties, with an unofficial estimate of these number to be 210,000 individuals. Registration of IDPs is beginning in the southern districts of the NWFP, especially in Frontier Regions Hangu, Bannu, and D.I. Khan.

¶3. (U) On January 24, IDPs from Mohmand Agency, living in camps in and around Peshawar, staged a protest in Peshawar against the lack of facilities and services at the various camps. Additionally, Shaukat Ullah, a Member of the National Assembly from Bajaur Agency, reported to Poloff recently that as military operations have continued in the FATA, growing numbers of Bajaur residents are moving as far as Rawalpindi and Karachi to find assistance.

#### PAKMIL INVOLVEMENT WITH IDPS

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14. (C) On January 23, ODRP Deputy Chief and Border Coordinator met with Pakistan Army Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) Javed Iqbal to discuss the IDP situation. Recognizing that the growing IDP situation and lack of government response posed a significant threat to military operations in the area, Iqbal said he was establishing a cell in Peshawar under the 11th Corps command to examine and assist with the IDP problem. Chief of Army Staff Kayani had told the Army to start taking the lead on the IDP issue, he said. Iqbal agreed this was a military problem -- as the months have dragged on, larger swaths of the population are becoming disaffected and disillusioned with both the government and the military. Iqbal recognized the military had lost months, and needed to start addressing the needs of the population to turn the situation around.

15. (C) While appreciating the need to serve those already displaced, Iqbal said the military prefers to focus on providing quicker compensation (preferably in cash) to affected families immediately following military operations; he said he was willing to meet any USG transparency and accountability requirements to make this program work. Iqbal also appreciated the need for better security in areas where IDPs are located and for those delivering assistance. However, he stopped short of making any kind of commitment on the part of the military to achieve that. It is unclear if the civilian government is aware of this military IDP cell, but Embassy recommended that the NWFP government be included on these discussions and response. Iqbal said he would

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inform us when the new IDP cell is stood up, and would invite us to meet with them.

#### INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO IDP ISSUE

17. (U) Following a number of conversations with various UN offices, UN headquarters within Pakistan has been coordinating and reviewing its programs. On January 22, the various UN offices met to discuss the consolidated appeal that was reported by the Embassy in previous communications. The draft consolidated UN appeal came to USD 122 million, with USD 23 million already received and USD 99 million in new money. This appeal is based on a projected IDP population of 600,000, once those in Swat and the southern districts are registered and the constant growth of the population by 100 individuals each day is taken into account. Additionally, we understand the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) will also make an appeal for approximately USD 20 million in February for additional humanitarian relief in Swat, Bajaur, and Dir.

18. (U) The World Food Program (WFP) has brought a consultant from Somalia to address problems of distribution in insecure areas and to assess staffing levels. WFP plans to have the capacity to distribute to all registered IDPs by February 2009 and has submitted an appeal (within the consolidated appeal) to the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance for USD 8 million, including a "blended food" component, which will address the shortages in supplements for children and pregnant women.

#### SECURITY REMAINS A PROBLEM

19. (C) On January 27, Acting DCM held a meeting with Rashid Khalikov, Director of the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in New York, as a follow up to the one held on January 21 in New York. (reftel) Khalikov expressed deep concern over the quality of the response by UN agencies in Pakistan to the growing IDP situation, but he did not offer a strong outlook on what he believed would be the next steps for the UN in country. Khalikov indicated he would not recommend a change in the security posture of the UN

agencies to allow them to work in the less secure affected areas. He was apprehensive about the idea of closer cooperation with the military, and said the UN agencies strongly preferred to keep their distance from military forces, especially in a situation in which the military is seen by some of those displaced as part of the reason for the IDP crisis. He noted that the UN would be willing to consider conversations or deals with anti-government militants, similar to the tactics used by ICRC to gain access to affected areas, but he fears these groups are so fragmented that protection and access could never be ensured. Furthermore, the GOP has explicitly informed ICRC and the UN agencies that only ICRC has its permission to speak with the anti-government forces. We observed that the status quo was not acceptable and stressed the need to work more closely with the military in the absence of no other options.

¶10. (U) According to the MFA, the UN Secretary General will be visiting Pakistan on February 4 to meet with GOP and UN officials.

COMMENT

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¶11. (C) Although the decision by the Pakistan Military to become involved with assisting the growing displaced population is a welcome gesture, it is unlikely that the Pakistani military would be willing or able to take over the entire IDP relief effort. However, there is much more they could do to create the conditions to allow humanitarian organizations to do their work. Their renewed focus on the need to take better immediate care of those affected by operations is also a step in the right direction.

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¶12. (C) For its part, the international assistance community needs to not be paralyzed by a non-permissive security environment. The fact is that there are a number of security challenges in the areas around the camps and where IDPs are concentrated, and not all of them are militancy-related. In the areas around Peshawar, for example, one of the biggest threats is criminal - kidnappings for ransom, armed robbery, etc. The UN may need to spend a larger proportion of its funding on providing for its own security, through security guard contracts, armored vehicles, better perimeter security construction, etc.

PATTERSON